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ABSTRACT

This longitudinal study summarizes the findings of the United States District Court Monitoring Commission, a temporary agency established under the Bradley v. Milliken desegregation case. The salient issues illustrated by the study are discussed. Sources of data highlighted by the commission are described: (1) the longitudinal survey of teachers and counselors; (2) the individual school assessment based on a three-level, criteria based assessment; and (3) data on high school attrition, proficiency and age distribution. Findings from data from all sources are compiled into a component-by-component summary of aggregate data. Summary findings are given for the following areas: (1) Bilingual Education; (2) Counseling and Guidance; (3) In-Service Training; (4) Reading; (5) School-Community Relations; (6) Student Code of Conduct; (7) Testing; and (8) Vocational Education. A graph portrays teacher and counselor ratings of the Detroit Public High Schools; a chart shows student attrition from regular day programs. (LMO)

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## U.S. District Court Monitoring Commission

The United States District Court Monitoring Commission is a temporary agency established by the United States District Court, Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, under the Bradley v. Milliken desegregation case. The commission:

- Acts as an arm of the court.
- Was established to oversee and "audit efforts made to implement the court's desegregation orders."
- Assists the court with reports and recommendations regarding implementation of the components of the Detroit desegregation plan.
- Is a state-funded agency operating with the assistance of the Michigan Department of Education and other public and private institutions.
- Provides a forum for broad citizen participation through volunteer monitors, component subcommittees, and an Executive Committee.
- Submits reports, findings, and recommendations to the U. S. District Court, N.A.A.C.P., Detroit Public Schools, State of Michigan, Detroit Federation of Teachers, and the general public.

## Members of the Commission Executive Committee

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Gordon A. Smith
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Lavinia Wingo

Kenneth A. Harris, *Executive Director*

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This report is a product of staff activities in support of the Detroit School District United States District Court Monitoring Commission, established by order of United States District Court Judge Robert E. DeMascio to monitor the implementation of school desegregation in the Detroit Public Schools.

Detroit, Michigan
April 1985

Kenneth A. Harris, Director

Ronald R. Dowe, Research Analyst
(Data Analysis, Computer Statistical Analyses and Graphics, Layout and Preparation)

Jean L. Peters, Sr., Education Consultant
(Counseling and Career Guidance, School-Community Relations, Vocational Education)

Gloria S. Rocha, Monitor Coordinator
(Education Specialist Assisting Consultants)

Gerard W. Teachman, Education Consultant
(Bilingual/Bicultural Education, In-Service Training, Reading, Student Code of Conduct, Testing)

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**Detroit School District**
**United States District Court**
**Monitoring Commission**

**Executive Plaza Building**
**Suite M 116, 1200 Sixth Street, Detroit, Michigan 48226**
**(313) 226-6363**

# * HIGHLIGHTS *

## Profiles of Detroit's High Schools: 1975 to 1984

1 The commission's first **High School Profiles** report was released in March 1979. It revealed that **teachers and counselors saw little improvement in education programs from 1975 to 1978.** Subsequently, Judge Robert DeMascio held hearings to determine why the court's orders were not being consistently implemented. Consequent to these hearings, the Detroit Public Schools began further implementation activities, chiefly in Counseling, School-Community Relations and Student Code.

2 In the commission's second **High School Profiles** report, covering through 1981, **the teachers and counselors viewed the schools as improving from 1978 to 1981.**

3 The most recent ratings in 1984 (see chart, page 3 below), however, showed that teachers and counselors evaluated the components, although higher than the 1978 ratings, as **declining from the 1981 ratings.**

4 Of the court-ordered components reviewed in the commission's criteria-based assessment process in the Detroit public high schools in 1981,[1] **Bilingual Education received the lowest assessment of compliance:** it was assessed at -.02 on the scale of -1.00 to +1.00. (see item #6 below) **Student Code received the second lowest assessment of compliance,** an index of .06. While Vocational Education (.23), School-Community Relations (.25), and Reading (.26) achieved similar compliance assessments, **the Counseling component received the highest assessment** (.44). (see item #7 below)

5 The Detroit Public Schools continued to **experience extraordinary losses of students from regular day school programs,** although there did appear to be a gradual and continuing improvement in high school retention. (see Chart 1.1, page 5 below)

**Reported 1983 national data indicated that approximately 74 percent of the 1979 grade 9 students in the United States graduated from high school four years later. For Michigan, the 1983 graduation rate was approximately 73 percent; Detroit's 1983 graduation rate was approximately 34 percent.**

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[1] See "Background: Process, Method, and Impact," beginning on page A-1 of the full report, for a discussion of methodology.



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6 **Bilingual Education:** By 1984, with the intensive technical assistance of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Detroit Public Schools had made steady progress in its ability to provide more accurate data on the number of students who were identified, tested, and served by the district. The school system had demonstrated progress in its recruitment of bilingual teachers, aides and education technicians. **The Michigan Department of Education had assigned staff to work more closely with Detroit and other districts to the end that acceptable services were provided to all eligible students.**

7 **Counseling and Guidance:** A consequence of court hearings in 1979 was Board action to adopt the Guidance Model as policy for the district, and there was subsequent dramatic progress in 1979-80. **The decline that began in 1980-81, in the absence of further court action, demonstrated that the Board and central administration again failed to place a high priority on implementing this component.**

Several factors had impinged on counselors' ability to provide counseling services, for example: (a) the continuing failure to eliminate in-school truancy required counselors to spend much of their time with students who had attendance problems; (b) diminished secretarial services also reduced the amount of time counselors actually counseled; and (c) their continuing involvement in correcting computer clerical and scheduling problems severely limited counselors during certain times of the year.

8 **In-Service Training:** By 1981, the commission found that the evidence indicated that the court-ordered In-Service Training component had been implemented. In-service training generally **improved over the period from 1978,** that is, teachers and counselors generally gave higher ratings to this component during each subsequent rating period (schools were rated in 1975 (retrospectively), 1978, 1981, and later in 1984). In every year surveyed by the commission, in-service training achieved the second highest ratings from Detroit's teachers and counselors.

By 1984, reports from teachers, administrators, and parents, however, suggested that more in-service training was needed in the content and objectives of the court's orders, and the Board's programs, especially Counseling and Guidance, School-Community Relations, and student discipline.

9 **Reading:** The available data indicated a general improvement in reading and other test scores in most high schools by 1984, but these data and other information suggested to the commission that the problem of improvement of high school reading scores might be best met by improvement of reading programs in earlier grades.



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By 1984, the commission reported that **the Detroit Public Schools had shown further steady improvement in high school reading as evidenced by increasing scores** on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests. Also in 1983-84, 73 percent of the high school graduates received endorsed diplomas under the district's High School Proficiency Exam program. The test scores generally indicated that a greater percentage of students were obtaining a mastery of basic communication skills.

(10) **School-Community Relations:** In 1981, the commission reported that very few high schools had consistently involved parents in their school-community relations organizations. By 1984, the commission had found that, although some high school organizations had shown progress, **the goal of the court-ordered component to develop a partnership between the community and the schools had not been accomplished.** School-community relations organizations were primarily "paper" organizations, participation was low, and there was a reluctance to share information and facts about the schools with parents and community.

Ratings of "parents' participation" in 1984 by teachers and counselors showed this component had remained relatively stable at a "D."

(11) **Student Code of Conduct:** By 1981, the Detroit School District was able to establish that the Uniform Code of Student Conduct and the district's 1980-81 version of the City-Wide Attendance Policy were in place in all of the high schools, but the district was not able to ensure that the Code or the attendance policy were enforced uniformly or equitably.

**In 1984, the commission reported three major areas of continuing concern: (1) lack of uniform implementation of discipline, (2) incomplete and inaccurate data, and (3) in-school truancy.**

Student Code data for 1984 revealed wide differences among the high schools in their reported disciplinary actions. Schools also differed in the severity of sanctions they imposed for similar violations of the Code. In each year surveyed by the commission, the number of disciplinary violations in the Detroit public high schools that could be characterized as "violent" exceeded 2,000.

Overall in 1984, high school teachers and counselors rated the "administration of student discipline" a "C-minus," which was lower than they had rated this component in 1981. **From 1975 through 1984, this component had remained the most controversial.**

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(12) **Testing:** By 1981, the Detroit Public Schools central administration had placed in all high schools the basic elements of the court-ordered Testing component. There was no indication that any testing procedures were unfair or discriminatory. According to the commission's assessments, **the Testing component represented the component with the most satisfactory and controversy-free implementation.** The problems that remained, particularly the inability of the district to ensure that all eligible students were tested, were related to local school management. In general, **the teachers in each school rated the administration of standardized testing higher than any other court-ordered component.**

(13) **Vocational Education:** The State of Michigan and the Detroit Board of Education were directed to jointly design and construct five area vocational-technical centers. By September 1982, four years after the originally proposed completion date, all of the court-ordered centers were operational, however, actual enrollments in the area centers had not exceeded 75 percent of the yearly revised capacity figures.

**The quality of vocational programs was strengthened by the excellent facilities and equipment of the area centers,** and student opportunities for participation in vocational programs **increased.** At the same time, however, prevocational programs at the high schools, with the exception of business education, declined in the adequacy of equipment, supplies and program offerings.

The commission noted that students must be provided with the opportunity to acquire the academic prerequisites required by the area center programs. If not, they would be unable to participate at the skills level necessary for advanced occupational training.

In 1984, the vocational education director had no line authority for the administration of the area centers and was neither able to coordinate activities nor make the decisions required for their continued improvement.

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**Monitoring Commission**

**Executive Plaza Building**
**Suite M 116, 1200 Sixth Street, Detroit, Michigan 48226**
**(313) 226-6363**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY of the Profiles of Detroit's High Schools: 1975 to 1984

The Monitoring Commission's **Profiles of Detroit's High Schools: 1975 to 1984** (October 1984), of which this is a summary, fulfilled a number of responsibilities with which the commission was charged. It served to highlight issues for the commission, and offered longitudinal data to the Detroit Public Schools Board and administration, the public, the court, and the parties to the **Bradley v. Milliken** desegregation case to illustrate the progress and needs of the Detroit Public Schools system, particularly the high schools. Summaries of the status of implementation of each of the court-ordered components begin on page 6 below.

The commission used various methods of data collection and various sources of information to prepare these **Profiles**. The full longitudinal report summarizes the methodology utilized for the study and the extensive collected data. It includes:

- "Profiles" of individual schools, including demographic data, attendance- and discipline-related information, and achievement and attrition data, summary criteria-based assessment indices, and teacher and counselor ratings.
- "Minimal Criteria" and "Indicators" used to assess individual school's component implementation.
- Compiled "statistical data" concerning the court-ordered components, and other individual school characteristics.
- "Scoring matrices" for individual schools, showing item-by-item scores, in each component, for every Detroit high school in 1981, using the commission's indicators.

The discussions below have been limited to some of the salient issues illustrated by the commission's longitudinal study.

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## The Longitudinal Survey of Teachers and Counselors

One source of data used in the report was the district's high school English and social studies teachers and counselors. Time-series data were derived from periodic surveys of teachers and counselors as to their evaluation of the individual school's delivery of services in the component areas. The aggregate ratings below (see page 3) summarize for all high schools in the Detroit district the individual high school ratings included in the report for each Detroit public high school. (see Section C, "Profiles of Individual Schools," in the full report)

Although some data indicated progress in particular schools, the surveys of teachers and counselors illustrated that they saw no significant improvement in quality of education programs from 1975 to 1978, when program implementation was being initiated and resistance to the court's orders was highest. The commission's first **High School Profiles** report was released in March 1979, and, subsequently, Judge DeMascio held hearings to determine why the court's orders were not being consistently implemented. Consequent to these hearings, wherein the court concluded that its orders could be implemented, the Detroit Public Schools began further implementation activities.

In the commission's second **High School Profiles** report, covering through 1981, the teachers and counselors viewed the schools as improving from 1978 to 1981. The commission's criteria-based assessment, which utilized measures of several thousand variables, also demonstrated program improvement.

In 1980, a three-judge panel was named to replace Judge DeMascio. The most recent ratings in 1984, however, showed that teachers and counselors evaluated the components, although higher than the 1978 ratings, as declining from the 1981 ratings. In late 1981, the court panel approved an agreement among the parties, the 1981 "Stipulation," that (a) established a schedule of payments for the four educational components jointly financed by the Detroit Board and the State of Michigan (Reading, Counseling, In-Service, and Testing); (b) established the duration of each of the components; and (c) established a process for yearly reporting by the district and review by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In 1984, the three-judge panel terminated the requirement that the district implement the court-ordered Student Code of Conduct and School-Community Relations components, and it terminated the requirement of the Monitoring Commission as a remedy in the desegregation case.

## The Criteria-Based Assessment

The Monitoring Commission developed an individual school assessment process to allow the comparison of school's implementation of programs and the assessment of their ability to deliver program benefits to students. A three-level, criteria-based assessment scheme was chosen. Criteria based broadly on the court's orders and program plans were adopted by the commission, and these then were further refined to yield operational



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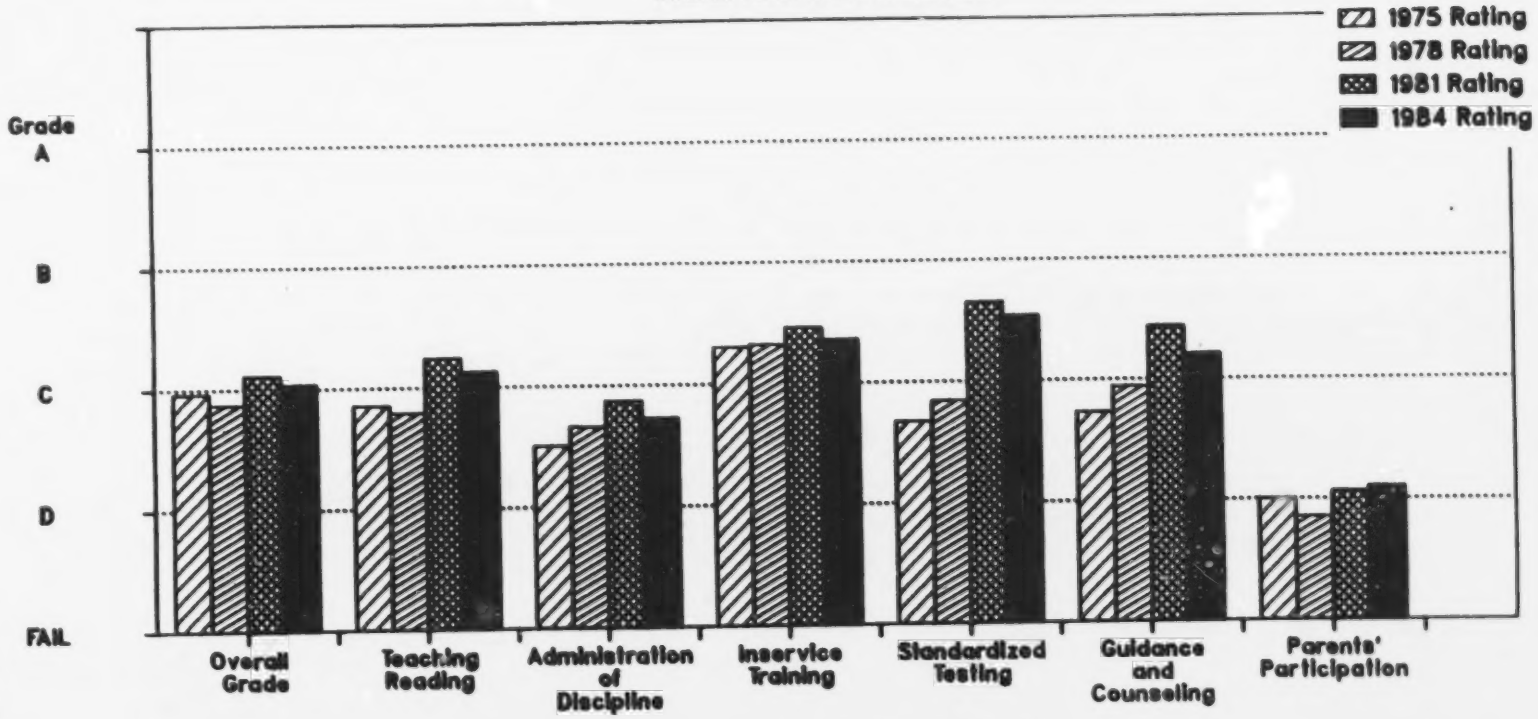
## TEACHER AND COUNSELOR RATINGS OF THE DETROIT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS 1975 THROUGH 1984 AGGREGATE RATINGS




**Assessment of Individual School's Delivery of Court-Ordered Programs--Part III**





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indicators of criteria satisfaction. The first level of assessment--**Assessment I**--produced a measure of the local school's administration's ability to provide responses and data to the commission's inquiries. The second level of assessment--**Assessment II**--then assessed the adequacy of school's responses to the commission's inquiries. And the third assessment level--**Assessment III**--applied quantitative measures to these school-based data to demonstrate whether the school was in compliance with the commission's specific criteria.

The indices showed wide diversity in the degree to which local school administrators were able to document implementation of the various elements of the court-ordered components. **Index I** (ability to provide responses) scores ranged from .41 to .99 on a scale of possible scores of -1.00 (unable to respond) to +1.00 (able to respond). **Index II** (adequacy of responses) scores ranged from .31 to .84 on a similar scale of possible scores ranging from -1.00 (inadequate responses) to +1.00 (adequate responses). While these first two scores measured primarily <u>administrative</u> compliance with the commission's inquiries, and evidence of initial efforts to implement particular segments of the court-ordered programs, **Index III** was viewed as a measure of the schools' relative success in passing along the intended benefits of the programs to students. High schools' **Index III** scores ranged from -.09 to .54 on a scale of -1.00 (does not meet specific criteria) to +1.00 (meets specific criteria).

## Criteria-Based Assessment Conclusions

Of the court-ordered components assessed in the Detroit public high schools in 1981, Bilingual Education received the <u>lowest</u> **Index III**, or compliance, assessment: it was assessed at -.02 on the scale of -1.00 to +1.00. Student Code followed with an **Index III** of .06. While Vocational Education (.23), School-Community Relations (.25), and Reading (.26) achieved similar **Index III** assessments, the Counseling component received the <u>highest</u> assessment (.44).

## High School Attrition, Proficiency, and Age Distribution

Other data highlighted by the commission depicted the salient issue of <u>attrition</u> from the Detroit public high schools, highlighted by the graph on the cover of the commission's longitudinal report, and reproduced below. (see page 5) These data indicate that the school system continues to experience extraordinary losses from regular day school programs, although there does appear to be a gradual and continuing improvement in high school retention.[1] Of those students who do graduate, between 20 and 30 percent

[1] Student "attrition" data are distinguished from "drop-out" data in that the latter make allowance for students who reenroll in another district or in private school. Reported 1983 national data indicated that high school student attrition was approximately 26 percent, that is, approximetely 74 percent of the 1979 grade 9 students in the United States graduated from high school four years later. <u>For Michigan, the 1983 graduation rate was approximately 73 percent. In these terms, Detroit's 1983 graduation rate was approximately 34 percent</u>.



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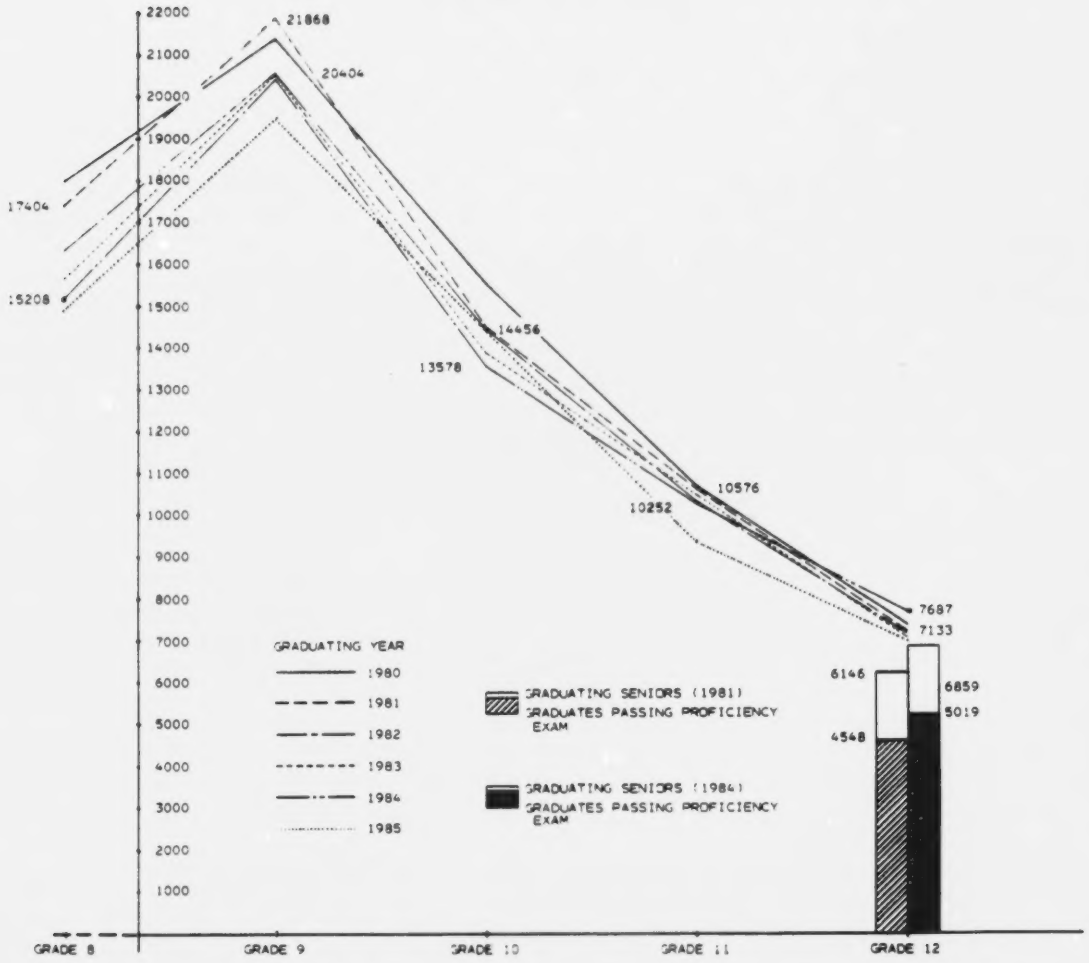
CHART 1.1: STUDENT ATTRITION FROM THE DETROIT PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS, REGULAR DAY SCHOOL PROGRAMS, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE PROGRESS OF GRADUATING COHORTS, 1980 GRADUATES THROUGH 1985 GRADUATES[A]




* *"Graduating seniors" reports the numbers of students graduated from regular, day high school programs (including Davis Center) in June 1981 and June 1984. Other students who graduated from evening and summer school programs are not reported here, and are not counted in these membership figures.*

** *Graduates passing all three sections of the Detroit High School Proficiency Examination receive a special endorsement on their diplomas.*

[A] Student attrition charts the grade-to-grade membership over succeeding years for cohorts of students, beginning in grade 8 through graduation five years later. For example, assuming normal grade progression, the 1984 graduating cohort would have been in grade 8 in 1979-80. This chart also displays the number of graduating seniors, and the number of graduates passing the district's High School Proficiency Exam, for 1980-81 (1981 graduating cohort) and 1983-84 (1984 graduating cohort). (see also Tables 1.2 through 1.5 below)

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graduate without the school system's proficiency examination endorsement on their diplomas. The district must also contend with the skewed age distribution of its high school population: in 1982, for example, 20.5 percent of the grade 9 students were 16 years of age or older.

Following below, the commission has summarized the findings developed from data from all sources. This is a component-by-component summary of the aggregate data as analyzed by subcommittees assisted by staff. The summary status of component implementation is outlined as of 1981, when the second High School Profiles report was issued, and has been updated as of the conclusion of the 1983-84 school year.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: Bilingual Education

The court-ordered Bilingual Education component required that the Detroit Board of Education implement Public Act 451, Michigan's Bilingual Education law, beginning in January 1976.

In 1976, the Monitoring Commission identified four major areas of concern regarding the implementation of Public Act 451: (1) the lack of guidelines from the State of Michigan as to what an acceptable Bilingual program entails; (2) the inability of the Detroit Public Schools to provide complete and accuarate figures as to the numbers of students who were identified, tested, and served; (3) the inherent problem at the high school level of providing instruction in the native language to students with varying degrees of proficiency in that language (Michigan law requires instruction in "the courses and subjects required . . . for completion of the grade level"); and (4) the lack of qualified staff in all languages.

By 1981, the Detroit public high schools were meeting the needs of a limited number of students that had been identified as eligible for bilingual education. The district was not providing bilingual instruction to all of the identified students in any high school. Further, there were not sufficient qualified staff, either teachers who were certified and endorsed by the State of Michigan, or para-professional aides, to meet the needs of all the identified students, nor were the high schools able to document that all potentially eligible students had been identified.

By 1984, with the intensive technical assistance of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Detroit Public Schools had made steady progress in its ability to provide more accurate data on the number of students who were identified, tested, and served by the district. The school system had demonstrated progress in its recruitment of bilingual teachers, aides and education technicians. The Michigan Department of Education had assigned staff to work more closely with Detroit and other districts to the end that acceptable services were provided to all eligible students. In response to concerns raised by the commission and periodic review by the MDE, by 1984 the district was implementing a "comprehensive bilingual education service plan," to provide bilingual services to high



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school students (and others) who formerly had not been served by the district. Part-time and full-time itinerant teachers, educational technicians, and teacher's aides were assigned to all high schools in a variety of languages. Students for whom bilingual instruction was not available in the Detroit high schools were to receive services through the Wayne County Intermediate School District's Bilingual Consortium, however, there was evidence the program was not fully implemented during the 1983-84 school year.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: Counseling and Guidance

The central purpose of the court-ordered Counseling and Guidance component, which was designed by the Detroit Public Schools, was to increase the delivery of guidance services to students and, thereby, to help create a positive school environment in a school system undergoing desegregation. The program was designed to restructure the role of school counselors by relieving them of clerical and other inappropriate tasks and by improving program management and supervision.

The Monitoring Commission's 1981 analysis showed that the Detroit district had made progress in implementation of this component subsequent to the commission's 1978 Profiles report. During the 1979-80 school year, progress had been made in increased delivery of guidance services to students and in the elimination of program impediments, however, during the 1980-81 school year the level of progress had declined. Some counseling personnel were again assigned inappropriate tasks, such as attendance record-keeping.

By 1984, the commission was able to report that:

(1) A consequence of court hearings in 1979 was Board action to adopt the Guidance Model as policy for the district, and there was subsequent dramatic progress in 1979-80. The decline that began in 1980-81, in the absence of further court action, demonstrated that the Board and central administration again failed to place a high priority on implementing this component.

(2) There had been a failure by top administrators to involve the central guidance staff in major decisions regarding implementation of the component, or even to make them knowledgeable of administrative or policy decisions affecting the component prior to their announcement or implementation. This resulted in the poor coordination of the component, and in diminished supervision and authority exercised by the central guidance staff. Meanwhile, no level of administration held local high school principals accountable for appropriate implementation of the component in local high schools.

(3) The difusion of responsibility and low priority given to implementation resulted in disuniform implementation of the component in local high schools. For example, evidence available from a majority, but not all, of the high schools suggested that in at least four of the

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district's high schools less than 30 percent of the students had received individual counseling, in at least nine high schools the percentage was less than 50 percent, and in only three high schools the percentage receiving individual counseling was over 90 percent.

(4) Since 1976-77, over $43 million had been allocated by the state and the Detroit Board to implement this component. There were also serious concerns that some of these funds had been misused to hire staff for other components at the same time that the number of guidance secretaries was reduced approximately 42 percent, thereby leaving counselors overloaded with clerical work.

(5) Several factors had impinged on counselors' ability to provide counseling services, for example: (a) the continuing failure to eliminate in-school truancy required counselors to spend much of their time with students who had attendance problems; (b) diminished secretarial services also reduced the amount of time counselors actually counseled; and (c) their continuing involvement in correcting computer clerical and scheduling problems severely limited counselors during certain times of the year.

(6) Data indicated that only nine high schools held more than two Guidance Advisory Committee meetings in 1983-84. The court order specifically required that these committees be established. Without functioning committees, parents, community, and staff will have little opportunity to make input and participate in the development of strong guidance programs.

(7) Finally, after giving steadily improving ratings to the Counseling component in 1978 and 1981, when the aggregate ratings had improved to approximately a "B," highest of the components surveyed, in 1984 counselors rated the component as declining to a "B-."

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: In-Service Training

The court's goal in the provision for the In-Service Training component was to ensure that all staff and other participants in the Detroit Public Schools were prepared to deal with the experiences that would accompany desegregation. The Detroit Board was to implement effective, on-going in-service training programs in the areas of teacher expectations, human relations, minority cultures, and in the educational components ordered by the court, particularly in the Uniform Code of Student Conduct.

By 1981, the commission found that the evidence indicated that the court-ordered In-Service Training component had been implemented. In-service training generally improved over the period from 1978, that is, teachers and counselors generally gave higher ratings to this component during each subsequent rating period (schools were rated in 1975 (retrospectively), 1978, 1981, and later in 1984). And in every year surveyed by the commission, in-service training achieved the second highest ratings from Detroit's teachers and counselors. Some schools, however, showed decline. It was conjectured that such declines may have reflected either (a) management changes (or the absence of such changes) in local

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high schools, or (b) dissatisfaction with yearly modifications in the implementation of certain components (e.g., Student Code and Counseling and Guidance).

Per the court-ordered "Stipulation" of 1981, agreement was reached to end co-funding by the State of Michigan and to deem this component completed at the conclusion of the 1982-83 school year. Court oversight ceased upon submission of a final report in 1983 by the Detroit Board.

By 1984, the commission reported that there was no evidence that any useful studies existed that evaluated the results of the in-service training ordered by the court. Reports from teachers, administrators, and parents suggested that more in-service training was needed in the content and objectives of the court's orders, and the Board's programs, especially Counseling and Guidance, School-Community Relations, and student discipline. In this vein, after recommedations from the commission's Student Code subcommitttee in February 1983, the Detroit Federation of Teachers filed a motion for contempt of court for failure to adequately implement the court's orders with respect to student discipline and requested that the court order the district to undertake substantial new in-service training.[2]

SUMMARY FINDINGS: Reading

The court ordered the Detroit Public Schools to develop and implement a comprehensive reading and communication skills program for students at all grade levels. The program developed by the Detroit Board for the high schools included a management program (Ninth Grade Objective-Referenced Tests (NGORT)), a comprehensive testing program, and an in-service training program for teachers in all content areas.

By 1981, the Detroit public high schools had put in place the initial aspects of the high school Reading component. Teachers and counselors in nineteen schools evaluated their schools higher in 1981 in the teaching of reading and communication skills than these schools had been rated in 1978; eighteen schools demonstrated improvement over their 1975 ratings; however, only three high schools were rated "B" or better; and six high schools received between a "C" and a "D." The available data indicated a general improvement in reading scores in most high schools, but these data and other information suggested to the commission that the problem of improvement of high school reading scores might be best met by improvement of reading programs in earlier grades.

[2] In its 24 April 1984 Memorandum terminating the requirements for the Student Code, School-Community Relations and Monitoring Commission as remedies in the case, the court considered this then pending motion moot. The intervening defendant Detroit Federation of Teachers and plaintiffs NAACP appealed this order to the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. As of April 1985, that appeal was still pending.

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By 1984, the commission reported that the Detroit Public Schools showed further steady improvement in high school reading as evidenced by increasing scores on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests. Twenty-one of the district's 24 high schools placed a larger percentage of their grade 10 students in the MEAP tests' top category (students achieving 75 percent or more of the tests' objectives) in 1983 compared to 1980, and 19 high schools had 50 percent or more of their students in the top category. When compared to 1982, twelve high schools showed improvement in 1984 and eleven high schools showed decline.

In 1984, high school English and social studies teachers in only seven schools rated their schools as improving over 1981 ratings in their ability to teach reading and communication skills. Teachers in nine high schools rated their schools as declining in reading. Only two high schools achieved a "B" rating, thirteen were rated approximately a "C," and three high schools were rated "D" or worse.

Also in 1983-84, 73 percent of the high school graduates received endorsed diplomas under the district's High School Proficiency Exam program. Only seven high schools endorsed 75 percent or more of their graduates. These percentages were virtually unchanged from 1980-81, when 73 percent of the high school graduates received endorsed diplomas, and seven high schools endorsed 75 percent or more of their graduates. (Only three schools--all city-wide, special high schools--graduated 75 percent or more of their graduates with endorsed diplomas in both 1981 and 1984.)

The Detroit Public Schools continued to implement its reading and reading-related programs with a relatively high degree of success. The test scores indicated that a greater percentage of students were obtaining a mastery of basic communications skills. This should allow the district to concentrate on programs designed to improve comprehension skills, critical thinking, and advanced writing skills.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: School-Community Relations

The court-ordered School-Community Relations component was "to strengthen communication between school personnel and parents, to encourage parental involvement in school affairs, and to increase understanding among parents from different communities."

In 1981, the commission reported that very few high schools had consistently involved parents in their school-community relations organizations. Overall, teachers and counselors rated "parents' participation" as having improved slightly to a "D": fourteen schools registered improved ratings in 1981 over their 1978 ratings; but 23 schools were rated "D" or worse; and only two schools were rated higher than "C"--both were city-wide, special high schools that were rated a "B."

By 1984, the commission had found that some local high school-community relations organizations had attained a level of parental and community involvement that showed that progress had been made toward a real


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partnership, however, these high schools were in the minority. The goal of the court-ordered component had not been accomplished. The Detroit Public Schools had instead accepted superficial organizations that failed to deal with the current concerns of parents and the community.

The commission's assessments of relevant data showed that in many high schools:

- school-community relations organizations were primarily "paper" organizations and participation was low;
- parents and staff were frequently uninformed, misinformed and confused about their roles and authorities;
- there was a reluctance to share information and facts about the schools with parents and community;
- although most high school administrators appeared to be aware of the importance of community support, not nearly as many were committed to the development of a strong, supportive school-community organization;
- apparently a considerable number of high school administrators believe that strong organizations may jeopardize their prerogatives, authority, or control;
- the Detroit Board had not provided a prompt and effective system for the resolution of local grievances;
- participation of parents at Area G (high school division) school-community relations meetings had dimished greatly over the corresponding participation of parents at the previous regional level meetings, in part because this new, more centralized organization was weak; and
- there had been decline in the attendance of parents at bi-weekly Central Board meetings.

Ratings of "parents' participation" by teachers and counselors showed this component had remained relatively stable at a "D," and that only eight high schools improved in their ratings over those received in 1981. Again, only two high schools were rated approximately a "B"--the same city-wide, special high schools that were rated a "B" in 1981. All the other high schools were rated approximately "D" or worse.

In its 24 April 1984 order, the court was of the opinion that recently enacted state law sufficiently required the Detroit Board to establish a school-community relations program. Consequently, the court ordered the Board to adopt its own school-community relations program, which it did on 28 August 1984.

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SUMMARY FINDINGS: Student Code of Conduct

The court ordered the Detroit Board of Education to implement the Uniform Code of Student Conduct in order to ensure a protected learning environment. The Monitoring Commission was charged to determine whether violence was being tolerated and whether disruptions were being dealt with. The commission was also directed to determine whether the Student Code was being administered uniformly without regard to regional lines, whether students were being offered minimal rights of due process, and whether all staff and school personnel were being provided with appropriate in-service training in the Student Code of Conduct.

By 1981, the Detroit School District was able to establish that the Uniform Code of Student Conduct and the district's 1980-81 version of the City-Wide Attendance Policy were in place in all of the high schools; but the district was not able to ensure that the Code or the attendance policy were enforced uniformly or equitably.

Teachers rated five schools approximately a "B," and twelve schools were rated about a "D," with four receiving a "D-minus."

In a September 1984 report to the court concerning the Detroit Public Schools efforts to implement the component during the 1983-84 school year, the commission reported three major areas of continuing concern: (1) lack of uniform implementation of discipline, (2) incomplete and inaccurate data, and (3) in-school truancy.

Student Code data for 1984 revealed wide differences among the high schools in their reported disciplinary actions. Several high schools had exclusion and suspension rates which exceeded or were below the city-wide average by from 50 to 100 percent. Similarly, schools differed in the severity of sanctions they imposed for similar violations of the Code, and these differences were particularly extreme for violations constituting illegal behavior. One high school, for example, reported 250 times more exclusions than suspensions for similar violations of the court-ordered Code than did another Detroit high school. This meant that in the first Detroit high school it was much more likely that students received minor disciplinary sanctions (i.e., sent home for three to five days) for "violent" or illegal behavior, while in the second Detroit high school students were likely suspended (i.e., involuntarily transferred to another school) and possibly recommended for expulsion from the school system. (In each year surveyed by the commission, the number of disciplinary violations in the Detroit public high schools that could be characterized as "violent" exceeded 2,000.)

The commission was able to provide data in its previous reports (e.g., 1981 High School Profiles) that indicated the degree of in-school truancy that existed in each high school by contrasting average record period attendance data reported by the Detroit Public Schools with average daily classroom attendance compiled by the commission from school system data. (In 1978 and 1981, some schools had an estimated 20 percent difference between official school attendance and average classroom attendance. This



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difference estimated the percentage of students attending record period but who were truant from other classes. In 1984 the commission estimated average high school classroom attendance to be approximately 75 percent.)

In 1982, the Detroit Public Schools changed its method of reporting attendance and it was no longer possible to estimate in-school truancy in the same way. Although the Detroit Public Schools said that a new method for identifying in-school truancy would be implemented, no such data were provided to the commission.

Overall in 1984, high school teachers rated the "administration of student discipline" a "C-minus," which was lower than they had rated this component in 1981. The 1981 ratings had represented the third year of improving ratings for the Student Code. In 1984, teachers in ten schools rated this component worse than they had three years earlier; in seven schools Student Code ratings showed some improvement; and two schools remained stable. Four Detroit high schools were rated approximately "B" or better, and ten received ratings of approximately "D" or worse, including two that were rated "Fail."

In summary, the Monitoring Commission's longitudinal study of the Detroit Board's efforts to implement the court-ordered Uniform Code of Student Conduct in its high schools allowed the following conclusions:

(1) The Detroit Board was not able to implement the Student Code uniformly throughout the district.

(2) Some local high school principals implemented the Student Code more successfully than other high school principals.

(3) The Detroit Board did not furnish the Monitoring Commission with complete and accurate reports of Student Code violations as required by the court's orders.

(4) The Detroit Board failed to provide the court with reports that reflected in-school truancy, in spite of the fact that the necessary data for such reports were available to the Detroit Public Schools.

On 24 April 1984, the court issued an order that relieved the Detroit Board of the obligation to implement the court's Uniform Code of Student Conduct. The Detroit Board was ordered to write and adopt its own code, which it did on 14 August 1984.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: Testing

The court-ordered, school-system designed Testing component was to (1) ensure that racial, ethnic, and cultural bias were avoided in any testing carried out in the Detroit Public Schools system; (2) establish a program that evaluated the effectiveness of instructional programs; (3) design, develop, and institute an objective-referenced testing

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capability; and (4) train teachers and administrators in non-discriminatory test administration procedures.

By 1981, the Detroit Public Schools central administration had placed in all the high schools the basic elements of the court-ordered Testing component. There was no indication that any testing procedures were unfair or discriminatory. The problems that remained, particularly the inability of the district to ensure that all eligible students were tested, were identified to be at the local school level and related to management. In general, the teachers in each school rated the administration of standardized testing higher than the other court-ordered components. Five high schools were rated above a "B" and only one high school was rated below a "C."

Per the 1981 "Stipulation," at the conclusion of the 1982-83 school year state funding ended and the component was deemed sufficiently implemented to also terminate court oversight.

According to the commission's assessments, the Testing component represented the component with the most satisfactory and controversy-free implementation. Testing activities implemented by the district as part of the desegregation remedy--the High School Proficiency Exam, the locally developed objective-referenced tests, and the evaluation activities, among others--were centrally administered and generally institutionalized.

## SUMMARY FINDINGS: Vocational Education

The court's desegregation goal for the Vocational Education component was "to ensure that the school system provides relevant and diversified vocational and technical programs to meet the needs of the students it serves." The State of Michigan and the Detroit Board of Education were directed to jointly design and construct five area vocational-technical centers to (a) provide instruction to some 10,000 eleventh and twelfth grade students by 1978, and (b) provide programs having content, equipment, facilities, and staffing "second to none."

Four of the five centers were not completed until after the commission's 1981 High School Profiles report was released in April 1982. In 1981, the commission reported on the status of interim efforts and on student opportunities for participation in continuing prevocational programs in the local high schools. The commission's assessments showed that student opportunities were generally satisfactory in 1981 but that they had declined from 1978 ratings. Teacher and department head ratings in 1978 emphasized the critical problem of inadequate equipment, supplies and facilities. The ratings for 1981 showed that these problems had not improved.

By September 1982, all of the court-ordered area vocational-technical centers were operational, however, operating student capacity for the area centers was revised yearly: by 1978, official documents indicated a total student capacity of 6,630 for the area centers; in 1982, capacity was


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listed as 5,084; in 1983, capacity was reported to be 5,032; and in 1984, total capacity was listed as 4,892. Since 1982, actual enrollments in the area centers has not exceeded 75 percent of the yearly revised capacity figures.

The commission's 1984 analysis showed that:

(1) Student opportunities for participation in vocational programs had increased in quality and quantity as a result of the construction and development of the five court-ordered area vocational-technical centers.

(2) The quality of vocational programs had been strengthened by the excellent facilities and equipment of the area centers, but the district still needed to take action to develop procedures to ensure the availability of classroom supplies.

(3) As of 1984, the Detroit Public Schools did not provide sufficient opportunities for students to participate in quality prevocational programs, that is, programs at the 9th and 10th grade level. To halt the deterioration of these programs and improve their quality, the Board and administration must set a higher priority on providing necessary funding.

(4) Students must also be provided with the opportunity to acquire the academic prerequisites required by the area center programs. If not, they will be unable to participate at the skills level necessary for advanced occupational training.

(5) The most current budgets for vocational education did not adequately provide for the replacement of old and inadequate equipment, or the purchase of needed class supplies, for the prevocational programs still in the comprehensive high schools. There also appeared to be little provision for implementation of the middle school and high school "articulation program." Without budgetary support, prevocational programs will continue to deteriorate.

(6) More emphasis should be placed on increasing the involvement of industry, business, labor, and community representatives through the centers' advisory and occupational committees.

(7) The district must improve aspects of its placement services, e.g., graduate follow-up and communication with employers, so that students can be assured that they will have the opportunity for appropriate employment upon satisfactory completion of quality vocational training.

(8) Although the Detroit Board named a director for vocational education in 1984, under current arrangements, responsibilities are still fragmented and the director has no line authority for the administration of the area centers and is unable to coordinate activities nor make the decisions required for their continued improvement. Further clarification by the Board of organizational accountability, responsibility, and authority for vocational education is still needed.

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